

HONORING THE WORK OF MIKE
WOODS

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 1999

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mike Woods and his more than 25 years of work as city clerk for the town of Smyrna, Tennessee. Mike's tenure will soon come to an end. He has decided to retire on November 30.

As clerk, Mike has seen Smyrna grow from a small community with an annual budget of \$500,000 dollars and 27 employees to being one of Tennessee's fastest growing cities with a population of more than 20,000, a current budget of more than \$25 million dollars and over 300 employees.

Mike worked hard, along with former Mayor Sam Ridley, to make Smyrna the home of Nissan Motor Manufacturing U.S.A., which has almost 6,000 workers. His vision and invaluable experience have served Smyrna well, and the city has been recognized with numerous state and national awards. Mike truly exemplifies the best of public service and will be sorely missed in city government.

I have known Mike since he first began his tenure in Smyrna and consider him a close friend. He has given me lots of good advice over the years, and I thank him for that. I congratulate Mike for his admirable and distinguished career and wish him the best of luck in future endeavors.

SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING
DIABETES

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for increased congressional spending to continue the research now progressing to seek a cure for diabetes. This devastating disease affects every family in America—my own brother is a victim of diabetes. The results of the disease are too numerous to count, but include blindness, loss of limbs, even shock resulting at times in death. At this time in our history, the incidence of diabetes in our population appears to be increasing.

We have made many strides in the treatment of diabetes, but much more needs to be done. It is very possible that in the near future we will be able to regenerate damaged beta cells in the pancreas, the cells which normally produce insulin. Alternatively, we may soon be able to generate new beta cells; in either case, it appears we will actually be able to cure the disease.

At this point in the process, we need to make an absolute commitment to this struggle to end this devastating disease. I commit myself and my vote to increasing spending on diabetes to an amount which will be sufficient for our scientists to accomplish this high goal.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING
WALTER PAYTON AND EXPRESS-
ING CONDOLENCES OF THE
HOUSE TO HIS FAMILY ON HIS
DEATH

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to strongly support this measure that recognizes a true sports hero and legend, Walter Payton.

Payton died of bile duct cancer at age 45. He is survived by his wife, Connie; his daughter, Brittney; and his son, Jarrett.

But it is not his death that lingers in our minds. It is his way of life that fills our memories and our hearts.

As a member of the Chicago Bears, Walter Payton stretched athleticism past the bounds of our imaginations. He bulled and wove throughout the football field with a creativity that allowed brute force and artistic expression to merge into one perfect moment.

Payton, the National Football League's leader in yards rushing (16,726) and carries (3,838), was known for his durability. He missed just one game in his 13-year career with the Bears. And during that time, he earned a Super Bowl ring. Payton retired after the 1987 season, and the Bears retired his No. 34. In the first year he was eligible for the Pro Football Hall of Fame, he was a unanimous selection.

But we cannot limit his worth to mere statistics and on-the-field achievement. Walter Payton represented sheer perseverance. Some would call Walter Payton the Cal Ripken of football. I would suggest that Cal Ripken is the Walter Payton of baseball. Indeed, Payton is the very embodiment of the term, "iron will."

His commitment to excellence and immense endurance makes his death seem all the more unbelievable. But Walter Payton did not lose his battle with liver disease. He simply ran out of time.

During an emotional, invitation-only memorial service that drew about 1,200 people, friends and family remembered Payton's practical jokes, his passion for those around him, his determination to be the best at what he did, and his generosity.

The public also had its chance to say goodbye during a ceremony at Soldier Field. Thousands of Bears fans filed into the stadium, many carrying signs in tribute and others dressed in Payton's familiar No. 34 jersey.

Yet, sports aficionados are not the only members of society who claim Payton as their hero. Any American, regardless of race or gender, can identify with Walter Payton. The consummate statesman, Payton carried himself on and off the field with dignity and class. He achieved, yet, he always remained committed to his team—individuality was not his style. It is because of his gentle and caring demeanor that he truly earned his nickname, "Sweetness." He was as sweet a person in real life as he was to watch on the football field.

And as an African-American, I am proud that an African-American holds such an imposing NFL record. His rushing record shows

that anyone can achieve lofty goals, regardless of race. It is a record that will stand for many years and will remain a testament to Payton's excellence.

Teammate Mike Singletary, one of five who offered a tribute at Payton's service, said if Payton saw people crying he would say: "Hold everything—I'm on hallowed ground. I'm running hills, I'm running on clouds. I'm running on stars. I'm on the moon."

"He affected so many people in a positive way, not only through athletic prowess, but through his generosity and for the way he lived his life," said Ditka, the coach of that Bears team that went 18-1. "Yeah, it isn't fair. Forty-five years on this Earth, you should be in the prime of your life. But I think it warns us that tomorrow is not promised."

We will remember Walter Payton and his famous jersey number "34" that he wore first at Jackson State and then with the Bears. We also will remember Payton in his Chicago uniform with his trademark white headband.

But most of all, we will remember Walter Payton for his pleasant smile, his warmth of character, and his will to achieve.

IN HONOR OF ANDREW SHARP
PEACOCK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say farewell to a good friend and great leader, Australian Ambassador, Andrew Peacock. Ambassador Peacock will retire from his duties as the Australian Ambassador to the United States. There will be a celebration in his honor to commend him for his many accomplishments and his lifetime service to his country and to the world's diplomatic corps.

Ambassador Peacock has had a brilliant career and has succeeded in every endeavor, at every level, and has done so with a joy of life. His life in public service began at the young age of 17, when he joined the Young Liberals in his native country, Australia. In just a few short years, his incredible leadership skills and great wit carried him to the position of President of the Young Liberal Movement. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Peacock became Vice-President and then President of the Victorian Division of the Liberal Party. Andrew Peacock made a great endeavor and entered Federal Parliament in 1966. As a parliamentarian, Mr. Peacock was instrumental in the nation's foreign affairs and industrial relations for almost 30 years. He redefined the Liberal Party in Australia and has proved his love of Australia throughout his career.

Mr. Peacock came to the United States from Australia in February 1997 after resigning from the Federal Parliament. His accomplishments here have been immeasurable and noteworthy. Ambassador Peacock has helped preserve the outstanding relationship between the United States and our loyal ally, Australia. Recently, Australia and the United States were able to move side by side in the peace-keeping efforts in East Timor, thanks to the enviable diplomatic skills of Ambassador Peacock.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring Ambassador Peacock for dedicating his life to his native land of Australia, to the cause